

Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Bahá'í Faith

by Bahá'í International Community

This written work was presented by the Bahá'í International Community to the Summit on the Alliance between Religions and Conservation. The summit - hosted by His Royal Highness Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, and co-sponsored by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Pilkington Foundation and the International MOA - was held in two sessions. These sessions were held in Atami, Japan, from April 3 to 9, 1995 and at Windsor Castle, United Kingdom of Great Britain, from April 29 to May 3, 1995. The summit included leaders of nine major religions: Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Sikh and Taoist.

Windsor, England

May 3, 1995

1. The Bahá'í Teachings on Conservation and Sustainable Development

In this time of transition towards a global society, the protection of the environment and the conservation of the earth's resources represent an enormously complex challenge. The rapid progress in science and technology that has joined the world physically has also greatly accelerated the destruction of biological diversity and the rich natural heritage with which the planet has been endowed. Material civilization, driven by the dogmas of consumerism and aggressive individualism and disoriented by the weakening of moral standards and spiritual values, has led to excess. Only a very broad vision of a global society, supported by universal values and principles, can inspire individuals to take responsibility for the long-term care and protection of the natural environment.

Bahá'u'lláh commands His followers to develop a sense of world citizenship and a commitment to the stewardship of the earth. His writings are imbued with a deep respect for the natural world and the interconnectedness of all things. They emphasize that the fruits of God's love and obedience to His commands are dignity, nobility and a sense of value. From these attributes emerge the natural inclination to treat one another with love and compassion, and the willingness to sacrifice for the betterment of society. Bahá'u'lláh also teaches moderation, a commitment to justice, and detachment from the things of this world: spiritual disciplines that allow individuals to contribute to the establishment of a prosperous and united civilization. The broad model for such a civilization and the principles upon which it is to be based are set forth in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, a revelation that offers hope to a discouraged humanity and the promise that it is truly possible both to meet the needs of present and future generations as to lay a solid foundation for social and economic development. The inspiration and vision for this civilization are captured in the words of Bahá'u'lláh:

"The land is a single country and humanity its citizens" [1]

Among the principles that guide the Bahá'í approach to conservation and sustainable development, the following are of particular importance:

- nature reflects qualities and attributes of God and, therefore, must ... respect and take great care;
- all things are interconnected and prosper according to the law of reciprocity; and
- the oneness of humanity is the fundamental spiritual and social truth that shapes our age.

Nature reflects the qualities and attributes of God.

The Bahá'í Writings describe nature as an emanation of God's will:

"Say: In its essence, Nature is the incarnation of Name, the Maker, the Creator Its manifestations are diversified by different causes, and in its diversity there are signs for men of understanding Nature is the Will of God and its expression within and through the contingent world, it is a dispensation of Providence ordered by the Computer, the All-Knowing. " [2]

Understanding nature as a reflection of the majesty of and an expression of God's purpose inspires deep respect for the natural world:

"... whatever I contemplate, I immediately discover that He makes Himself known to you, and reminds me of Your signs, and Your signs, and Your testimonies ... For Your glory! Every time I lift my eyes to Your heaven, it brings me to the memory Your excelsitude and Your sublimity, and Your incomparable glory and greatness, and every time I turn my gaze to Your earth, I feel compelled to recognize the evidences of Your power and the signs of Your generosity, and when I observe the sea, I found that I had Your majesty, the power of Your strength, and Your sovereignty and Your greatness, and whenever I contemplate the mountains, they lead me to discover the emblems of your victory and the banners of your omnipotence. " [3]

This attitude of respect is further reinforced by the rich metaphorical references to the natural world woven throughout the Bahá'í Writings. However, while nature is highly valued and respected, it is not to be worshiped or worshiped. But it must serve the purpose given by God to the human race: to carry forward a civilization in continuous advance. On this side, the Bahá'í Faith promotes a worldview that is neither biocentric nor anthropocentric, strictly speaking, but theocentric, with the Revelations of God in the center. Mankind, striving to carry out the Divine Will in this, the physical realm, is therefore the trustee or the protector of nature.

The trust responsible for the natural world extends logically to the humane treatment of animals.

"Not only to his fellowmen of the human race should the beloved of God deal with mercy and compassion, but they must demonstrate the greatest kindness to every living creature." [4]

"Teach your children from their first days to be infinitely tender and affectionate with animals. "[5]

All things are interconnected and prosper according to the law of reciprocity.

The principles of interconnection and reciprocity underlie the Bahá'í understanding of both the operations of the universe and the responsibilities of humanity.

"Well, each part of the universe is linked to all the other parts with ties that are very powerful and that do not admit any imbalance, nor any neglect ..." [6]

"Cooperation and reciprocity are essential properties inherent in the unified system of the world of

existence, without which the entire creation is reduced to nothingness." [7]

"If one observes with a vision that discovers the realities of all things, he will come to see clearly that the most important relationship that holds the world of being together is within the realm of the same things created, and that cooperation, mutual aid and reciprocity are essential characteristics of the unified body of the world of being, inasmuch as all created things are closely related to each other and each is influenced by the other or derives some benefit from it, be it direct or indirectly. "[8]

The evolutionary processes are stated explicitly in the Bahá'í Writings:

"All beings, whether great or small, were created perfect and complete from the beginning, but their perfections appear in them by degrees. The organization of God is one, the evolution of existence is one, the divine system is one. ... When you consider this universal system, you see that there is not a single being that at the beginning of its existence has reached the limit of perfection, no, they grow and develop gradually, and then they attain the degree of perfection. " [9]

The blessings of bio-diversity also stand out:

"(L) diversity is the essence of perfection and the cause of the appearance of the gifts of God This diversity, this difference, is like the naturally created dissimilarity and variety of the members and organs of the human body, since each of them contributes to the beauty, efficiency and perfection of the whole How ungrateful it would be if all the flowers and plants, all the leaves and buds, the fruits, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and color! The diversity of tones, of form and aspect, enriches and adorns the garden, and makes its effect ... "[10]

The spiritual plane and the material plane are interconnected and act one on the other:

"We can not separate the human heart from the external environment and say that once we have reformed one of the two, everything will improve, man is organic with the world, his inner life shapes the environment and he himself is deeply affected by it. one acts on the other and all permanent change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions. " [11]

Given the fundamental unity of science and religion - the interconnectedness of the material and spiritual realms - it is not surprising that scientific efforts are greatly praised:

"(L) a faculty of intellectual investigation regarding the secrets of creation ... is the most praiseworthy power of man, because by the employment and exercise of this the improvement of the human race is achieved, the development of the virtues of humanity ... "[12]

However, the exercise of the faculty of research has to be guided by spiritual principles, especially moderation and humility.

"(C) Any organism, whatever it may be, even if it were the instrument of the greatest benefit to humanity, can be misused." [13] "If carried to excess, civilization will be as prolific a source of evil as it had been. of good when it remained within the constraints of moderation. " [14]

"Every man of discord, when walking on earth, really feels ashamed, because he knows perfectly well that what is the source of his prosperity, his wealth, his power, his exaltation, his progress and strength, as he has been ordained by God It is the earth itself, which the feet of all men tread ... There is no doubt that whoever knows this truth has been purified and sanctified of all pride, arrogance and vainglory "[15]

In light of the interdependence and reciprocity of all parts of nature, the evolutionary perfection of all beings, and the importance of diversity "to beauty, efficiency and perfection of all," is clear to the Bahá'í. It is he who, in the order of human affairs, should make every effort to preserve as much as possible the biodiversity and the natural order of the earth.

However, in the process of extending social and economic justice to the entire human family, certain difficult and possibly irreversible decisions must be made. Such decisions, Bahá'ís believe, must be made within a consultative framework, involving those who are affected and taking into account the impact of any policies, programs and activities resulting in the quality of life of subsequent generations.

For Bahá'ís, Bahá'u'lláh's promise that civilization will exist on the planet for a minimum of five thousand centuries makes it unscrupulous to ignore the long-term impact of the decisions made today. Therefore, the world community must learn to make use of the earth's natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, in a way that ensures sustainability in the distant future. However, this does not mean that the Bahá'ís advocate a policy "without touching, back to the forests". On the contrary, the world civilization that Bahá'ís believe will eventually emerge will be animated by a deep religious faith and will be one in which science and technology will serve humanity and help it live in harmony with nature.

The uniqueness of humanity is the fundamental spiritual and social truth that forms our age.

The uniqueness of humanity is, for Bahá'ís, the working principle and the ultimate goal of the collective life of humanity on the planet. It applies not only to the individual, but also to the relationships that have to unite all states and nations as members of a human family:

"The uniqueness of humanity ... implies an organic change in the structure of today's society, a change as the world has not yet lived It requires nothing less than the reconstitution and demilitarization of the entire civilized world - an organically unified world in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its commerce and finances, its writing and its language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units. [17]]

"It represents the consummation of human evolution ... and ... carries with it nothing more and nothing less than a solemn assertion that the achievement of this final stage in its stupendous evolution is not only necessary but inevitable, that its realization is approaching quickly, and that nothing that is not a power born of God can succeed in establishing it. " [18]

The Bahá'í Writings maintain that adherence to the principle of the oneness of humanity will have a direct and lasting impact on the spiritual, social and physical environments of man. The universal acceptance of this principle will require a restructuring of the educational, social, agricultural, industrial, economic, legal and political systems of the world. This restructuring will facilitate the emergence of a sustainable, just and prosperous world civilization. In the end, only a civilization with a spiritual base - in which science and religion function in harmony - will be able to preserve the ecological balance of the earth, foster stability in the human population, and advance the material and spiritual welfare of all peoples and communities. Nations

In conclusion

The Bahá'í Writings teach that as trustees of the vast resources and biological diversity of the planet, humanity has to strive to protect the "inheritance (of) future generations" [19]; see in nature a reflection of the divine; to approach the earth, the source of material blessings, with humility; balance your actions sparingly; and be guided by the fundamental spiritual truth of our age, the oneness of humanity. The speed and ease with which we establish a sustainable life pattern will depend, in the end, on the extent to

which we are willing to transform, through the love of God and obedience to His Laws, into constructive forces in the process of create a civilization in continual progress.

II. A Review of the

Bahá'í Mondial Community Environmental Program from Joining the Conservation and Religion Network in 1987

For decades, Bahá'í individuals and Bahá'í communities have been involved in the protection and preservation of the environment. However, during the last ten years, there has been a remarkable growth in these initiatives.

At the global level, the Bahá'í International Community officially joined the Network on Conservation and Religion of the Mondial Fund for Nature (WWF) in 1987.

In 1989, a compilation of excerpts from the Bahá'í Writings was issued to the Bahá'í world. This collection, Conservation of Earth Resources, has been extensively studied in Bahá'í communities around the globe and has provided a greater glimpse and inspiration for Bahá'ís who undertake conservation initiatives. In the same year an Office of the Environment was created within the Bahá'í International Community. The Office of the Environment represents the Bahá'í International Community at the United Nations and other international forums addressing issues of sustainable development. It puts environmental concerns before the attention of Bahá'í communities and catalyzes activity by providing communities with information and helping them form networks with individuals, institutions and resources.

Scores of national communities - including Brazil, Japan, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, and Taiwan - and many local communities have created Environment Offices or the equivalent. These offices promote activities and sustainable development education, often in cooperation with other organizations and individuals with similar principles and goals. Several additional communities have incorporated environmental protection in the sphere of their already established Offices of Social and Economic Development.

The following examples of environmental initiatives and development activities involving Bahá'í communities and individuals are cataloged under five categories:

education and training; Projects; the arts; advocacy; and Bahá'í Sacred Places and gardens.

Education and Training

Numerous education and public awareness programs have been launched to encourage conservation and sustainable development on the part of Bahá'í communities and individuals around the world.

- Bahá'í communities around the world are involved in a continuing effort to better understand and apply the Bahá'í Teachings to the environmental challenges facing humanity. They are examining the Bahá'í Writings on conservation and development and exploring ways to transfer the teachings into action. Individual and collective study, reflection and consultation often lead to plans and projects.

- Articles on the environment and development have been written by several Bahá'í scholars, and several Bahá'í publications currently regularly contain information and ideas related to conservation.

- Bahá'í schools, summer schools, youth conferences and other meetings have devoted sessions and

sometimes entire programs to issues of environment and development. Working groups on sustainable development issues have been formed under the auspices of several Associations for National and Regional Bahá'í Studies.

- The Bahá'í Environment Office for Japan has started environmental education programs in community groups in Honshu and Kyushu.

- The Bahá'í community of Brazil, together with UNICEF, launched a conservation education program, where teachers were trained in the capital and its surroundings, Brasilia, and produced curriculum materials and a video. The second phase of this project is currently underway, carrying the same activities to several Brazilian states.

- Several local and national Bahá'í communities - from Saskatoon, Fort Murray and Leicester, to Zimbabwe, Guyana and India - have developed curriculum modules and locally relevant conservation education materials.

- The Bahá'í Bureau of the Environment for Taiwan, in collaboration with the national government, has trained hundreds of teachers across the country to introduce conservation issues into curricula. The Office has also produced a series of educational programs for the national radio on the care and protection of the environment.

- The Nur University in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, whose educational and administrative philosophies are derived from Bahá'í principles, has initiated a Masters in Development program.

- Bahá'í community radio stations in six countries broadcast programs and public service announcements on various issues of environment and development, including sustainable agricultural practices and care for the land.

- Young Bahá'ís in Colombia conduct environmental camps to study conservation principles as found in the Bahá'í Writings and to convert these principles into action.

- Ecología y Unidad Mundial, a bi-monthly newspaper issued by the Bahá'í community in Argentina, reports on environmental and development issues. It is sold throughout Argentina and is distributed worldwide.

- Vanguardia Trust, a Bahá'í-inspired organization that started in Puerto Rico, produces a quarterly newsletter of ideas and projects focused on education, appropriate technology and development.

- One Country, the quarterly newsletter of the Bahá'í International Community, which is sent to more than 30,000 individuals and organizations (in Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish), regularly reports environmental and development issues.

Projects

Conservation projects range from individual initiatives such as Rainbow Reforestation, an effort by two Bahá'ís, Ms. Anne Mane and Mr. Michael Kariberg, to apply the spiritual principles of unity and consultation to reforestation work large scale in Canada; to community-initiated clean-up campaigns by young Bahá'ís in Scotland and tree planting in Iceland, Pakistan, Uganda, Brazil, Haiti and Australia.

- The Tora-san Project is a continuous experiment in organic farming by the Bahá'í community of Japan. Located near the city of Kurume, Kyushu, children, youth and adults are learning to harvest food

without pesticides or artificial fertilizers.

- The Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women in Indore, India, has programs dedicated to the improvement of the spiritual, physical and social environments. At the Earth Summit, the Institute received the Global 500 Award presented by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

- The Clean and Beautiful Swaziland campaign (Swaziland Clean and Beautiful) has received praise from the national government for its work in cleaning rural areas of the country. The founder of the campaign, Dr. Irma Alien, a Bahá'í from Swaziland, also received the prestigious UNEP Global 500 Prize.

- Ms. Fatima Traazil, a Bahá'í from Singapore, received the National Green Leaf Award from the Ministry of the Environment for her ongoing campaign to promote safe environmental principles by encouraging recycling and discouraging waste.

- New Dawn Engineering (New Dawn Engineering), an initiative led by Bahá'ís in Swaziland, produces appropriate environmentally friendly technologies.

- More, of 40 national Bahá'í communities around the world started activities on the 20th Anniversary of Earth Day in 1990. Bahá'í communities are still active every year on Earth Day as well as on Earth Day. World Environment Day

- The SR-2 solar radio, produced for the Vanguardia Trust by Dr. K. Dean Stephens, a Bahá'í, has contributed new technology to the field of solar-voltaic radio. Ten thousand SR-2 have been produced and the model is being tested in the campaign by various governmental and non-governmental organizations. An advanced model, SR-4, is currently being developed.

- Fish hatchery projects have been initiated by Bahá'í communities in Bolivia and Malaysia.

- The Bahá'í community in Cochabamba, Bolivia, has developed highland greenhouses, and has brought this low-cost technology to several villages.

- Many local Bahá'í communities throughout Malaysia are involved in recycling.

- Short-term and long-term tree planting campaigns have been initiated by Bahá'í communities in many parts of the world: these include the Breath of Life tree planting project in the Baha'i community of Hawaii which planted indigenous trees in all the Hawaiian Islands; the afforestation efforts of the students of Bahá'í Rabbani Secondary School in Madhya Pradesh where tens of thousands of trees have been planted on school grounds and in surrounding villages; the efforts of the Bahá'ís in Washington, United States, to replant de-barked shores; the project of reforestation of villages of the Bahá'í Anís Zunùzí School in Puerto Principe, Haiti; and the campaign of the Baha'is of Iceland for planting thousands of trees in Skógar, the ancestral property of the famous Islamic poet, Mr. .

- The Bahá'í community of Mauritius was instrumental in launching a national and interreligious conservation network.

- Bahá'í communities in Kenya are involved in the manufacture and distribution of energy-efficient "jiko" stoves that burn coal.

- The Bahá'í community of the Philippine Islands, working in conjunction with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, has been involved in environmental education and conservation work in Camp John Hay National Park.

- Many communities are involved in cleaning and embellishing parks, roads and riverbanks. Many of these efforts are ongoing, including "take a road" campaigns.

The arts

The importance of the arts in inspiring changes in attitudes and behavior is emphasized in the Bahá'í Writings. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that many Bahá'í communities have used the arts to promote awareness of and commitment to conservation. These cover a large range as shown in the following examples.

- The Bahá'í International Community organized the Arts for Nature event at Syon House in London, both to encourage artistic expression in the service of conservation and to raise funds for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

- The Bahá'í Committee of Women of Singapore organized a similar national event of Arts for Nature. Many artistic works were created by Singaporean artists for this event, and funds were raised for conservation projects in the region.

- The Bahá'í community of the Philippine Islands has organized music festivals to raise awareness of national environmental issues.

- The Bahá'í International Community and its Brazilian national affiliate, in collaboration with UNICEF, produced a children's art book, *Tomorrow Belongs to the Children*. Thousands of school children from 26 nations around the world discussed sustainable development issues and produced art and poetry based on these conversations. Then contests were held to choose works that would appear in this book. *Tomorrow Belongs to the Children*, with its moving messages, has been distributed to thousands of individuals, including Heads of State and UN Ambassadors.

- In 1994 the Bahá'í Environment Bureau for Taiwan held an international children's art competition and exhibition on the theme, "Our Fragile Environment"

This exhibition was seen by tens of thousands of people. The second contest and exhibition, "Los animales y yo", is scheduled for the end of 1995.

- The Peace Monument in Rio de Janeiro, stands as an enduring symbol of the new spirit of global cooperation that characterized the Earth Summit and the Global Forum. An initiative of the Bahá'í International Community and its Brazilian national affiliate, the monument was designed by the renowned Brazilian artist and sculptor, Mr. Siron Franco. As part of the closing ceremonies of these historic twin events, 40 nations were deposited by children on the five-meter-high hourglass ceramic and cement monument. Ceremoniously land of additional countries is added every year on World Environment Day. More than 80 nations have already contributed. Inscribed in the monument, as a reminder of the highest ideals of the Earth Summit and the Global Forum,

Advocacy

The Bahá'í world has become more and more involved in advocating for conservation and sustainable development.

- The Bahá'í International Community and many of its local and national affiliates participated extensively in the entire process before and including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (or Earth Summit). Approximately one million copies of statements and works written by the Bahá'í International Community on environmental and development issues were distributed worldwide in several languages. The Bahá'í communities active in this historical process worked with their governments and civil society organizations. In the process, many Bahá'ís were better educated about the issues touched by the Earth Summit and became much more globally aware.

- The Bahá'í International Community, in collaboration with other organizations, has sponsored two World Magna Carta Meetings, one in 1989 and one in 1994. The first Magna Carta Global Forestry Meetings brought diplomats to the Court of St. James in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s to discuss the state of the world's forests. These meetings were initiated by Dr. Richard St. Barbe Baker, who was among the first global environmentalists, and who also began in 1920 a series of ambitious projects - including travel, fieldwork, speeches and writings - dedicated to putting before world attention the condition of our environment. The 1989 Magna Carta of Forestry commemorated the centenary of the birth of Dr. Baker and faced current programs aimed at preserving the world's forests. The 1994 Meeting was of particular importance because of its focus on the Forestry Principles, adopted at the Earth Summit, and for realizing the need to see forests as the common heritage of mankind in order to conserve and make work sustainably for a distant future.

- The Bahá'í International Community is one of the founding partners and main supporters of Advocates for African Food Security: Lessening the Burden for Women: A Coalition of Organizations formed to create awareness, particularly among those who create laws, about the critical role that African women play in ensuring the security of the continent's food.

- Many Bahá'í communities are currently working with local authorities and civil society organizations to encourage the implementation of Agenda 27, the global action plan for sustainable development adopted at the Earth Summit. For example, Bahá'í communities throughout Germany and the United Kingdom are turning to local authorities (the theme of Chapter 28 of Agenda 21) to discuss the promotion of the concept of global doubt as a moral and ethical basis of development. . Similarly, the Baha'i communities of Denmark, Sweden and Australia have launched campaigns in schools focusing on world citizenship.

- Bahá'í communities are becoming more and more involved at the local, national and international levels in conferences, round tables, commissions and coalitions, many in connection with larger UN consultations. Bahá'ís participated extensively in the Earth Summit process, the Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Global Forum '94, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development , and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Sacred Places v Bahá'ís Gardens

The Bahá'í Holy Places and the Bahá'í Houses of Worship are known throughout the world for their exquisite gardens. The gardens at the Bahá'í World Center, so dear to Bahá'í pilgrims as shelters for spiritual rejuvenation, also attract large numbers of tourists from all over the world. Its beauty and tranquility inspire a deep respect for the natural world. The metaphor of nature found in all the Bahá'í Writings has found expression in a very practical, and at the same time sublime, way in these gardens.

The spiritual and administrative centers of the Bahá'í World by design are found together and surrounded by magnificent beauty. In fact, it is this design that inspires reflection on the idea that spiritual development, the administration of community affairs, and respect for nature are inseparable elements of all programs aimed at promoting the welfare of humanity at the same time that a sustainable world

civilization is built.

Young people from all over the world, offering one year of service in the World Center, serve as volunteers in the Bahá'í Gardens. Many of these young people not only have developed, through this work, a deeper respect for nature, but have taken back to their own communities a lasting commitment to conservation.

III. Bahá'í Initiatives in the Areas of Conservation and Sustainable Development: Prospects for the Future

Development, for Bahá'ís, implies a dynamic coherence between the spiritual and material requirements of life on earth. The Bahá'í approach to development is organic and seeks to harmonize the seemingly paradoxical concepts of globalism and decentralization. General direction and guiding principles are established at international - and often national - levels, helping to ensure a sense of process and global mission in all development activities. At the same time, current programs and activities arise largely from individual or community initiative, are directed by community decision-making processes and are based on the principle of universal participation. Therefore they are likely to address the needs, conditions and aspirations of the local / national society. Due to this approach, it is not possible to detail the projects and programs to be carried out by the communities in the years to come; however, development activities in the future can be strongly suggested.

In the years immediately ahead, the Bahá'í world community will undoubtedly expand the focus and scope of its conservation and sustainable development initiatives, while continuing on the established paths including

- education and training efforts that address conservation issues ;
- projects, both individual and community, aimed at the protection and restoration of the environment;
- the use of the arts to inspire an active commitment to environmental protection and development; and
- advocacy for sustainable development at local, national and international levels.

The vast present extension of the gardens in the Bahá'í World Center, including the construction of terraces from the foot to the peak of Mount Carmel, will increase the greatness and majesty of this central point of the Bahá'í World while providing an extended environment in which a deep respect for nature can be developed and a lifelong commitment to its care and protection. Likewise, the lands around the Bahá'í properties, including the Bahá'í Houses of Worship, will continue to be embellished to serve as an inspiration to all who visit.

The Bahá'í world will intensify the process of seeking to apply the spiritual principles of unity, justice, solidarity and moderation to current economic, technological, social and political challenges. It will collaborate more and more with individuals and groups of similar goals - including civil society organizations, government and others - to help make the fundamental changes required in society if peace and sustainable development are to be realized.

The Bahá'í world will work ceaselessly to develop in all its members - children, youth and adults - a deep respect for nature as a reflection of the majesty of the Divine, and a global consciousness based on the spiritual principles of unity in the diversity, justice, love, and service.

Bahá'í communities will strive to grow in solidarity and practical experience, thus demonstrating a new pattern of development at the grassroots level capable of restoring both human dignity and the environment, and showing that the unity of the human race is not a utopian ideal but a practical possibility.

First of all, the Bahá'í world will continue to foster hope for the future. He will share with confidence his conviction that, by following God's will on this day, humanity will be transformed, unity and peace will be achieved, and a sustainable world civilization will emerge - the fruits of which will be enjoyed by the entire human family - and it will extend to a distant future.

NOTES TO THE CALCE:

"Passages from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1978, sec. CXVII, p.166.

Bahá'u'lláh "Tables of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1982, p. 165.

Bahá'u'lláh "Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1984, sec. CLXXVI, p.

"Selection of the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1987, sec.

138, pgs. 160-162.

Id.

"Selection of the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1987, § 137, page 159.

' Abdu'l-Bahá, from a translated Table of the Persian

.

'Abdu'l- Id. Bahá, "Some Answered Questions," page 199.

"Selection of the Writings of " Abdu'l-Bahá", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1987, sec.225, pp. 295-296,

Secretary of Shoghi Effendi, from a letter dated February 17, 1933 to an individual believer:

'Abdu'l-Bahá "The Promulgation of Universal Peace", page .. 31.

' Abdu'l-Bahá "The Secret of Divine Civilization", EBILA , Buenos Aires, 1986, page 20.

Bahá'u'lláh "Gleanings", p. 343

"Epistle to the Son of the Wolf", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1985, p .. 39.

"Selection of the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá", EBILA, Buenos Aires, 1987, sec. 225, pgs. 295-296.

Shoghi Effendi, "The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh p .. 42-43,

Id.

Shoghi Effendi, from a telegram dated May 23, 1951, to the New Earth Luncheon, London, United Kingdom.